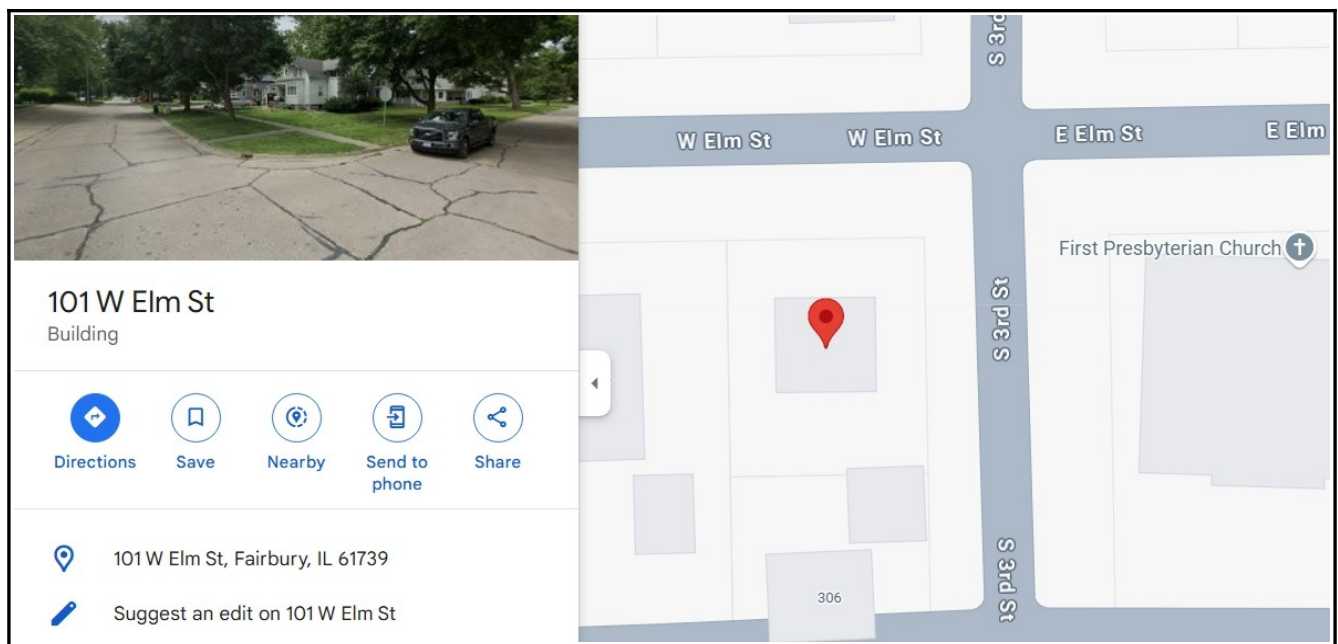


Research and Results for House at 101 W. Elm Street in Fairbury

By: Dale C. Maley

Google Map View of House



General Comment on House Histories

The most difficult area of historical research is house history because there is no good database of past ownership history. The previous sales transactions were manually recorded in big books at the old courthouse in Pontiac. I have tried to research 2 old Pontiac houses, and it is tremendously time consuming and difficult.

Prior to about 1968, they used what I call a complete Title/Abstract form each time they sold the house. It has the past ownership history of the lot clear back to the first person that bought the land from the U.S. Government. The documents got to be very thick, often running 50 to 100 pages, so in 1968 they stopped this practice.

A few of these complete Title/Abstracts still exist. Homeowners often did not know what they were, so they just kept passing them along to the next owners. If you are checking a house history, you should always ask the owner if they have this document, which is usually folded in thirds and with 30 to 100 pages because they have all the history of who owned the lot.

Livingston County Tax Assessor web site

You can look up any house on this free web site, and it will tell you the year their records show the house was built. I have found them to be over 90% accurate for year built. In some exceptional cases where houses were moved, they are not accurate.

<https://livingston.illinoisassessors.com/search.php>

Parcel Number:	25-25-03-464-006
Deed Holder:	MEISTER BRENDA G
Property Address:	101 W ELM ST FAIRBURY, IL 61739-0000 MAP THIS ADDRESS
Class:	RESIDENTIAL
Map Area:	FAIRBURY CORP
Legal Description:	25-03-464-006 LOT 75 X 90 N90' OF E1/2 LOT 13 & N90' LOT 14 BLK 5 CITY OF FAIRBURY
Property Report:	PROPERTY REPORT (PDF FILE)
	
Tax Information:	TAX INFORMATION

Final 2024 Assessed Values				
N/F Land Value	N/F Building Value	Farm Land Value	Farm Building Value	Total Value
\$2,456	\$26,073	\$0	\$0	\$28,529

Land Information		
Lot Type	Square Feet	Acres
Lump Sum	0	0.000

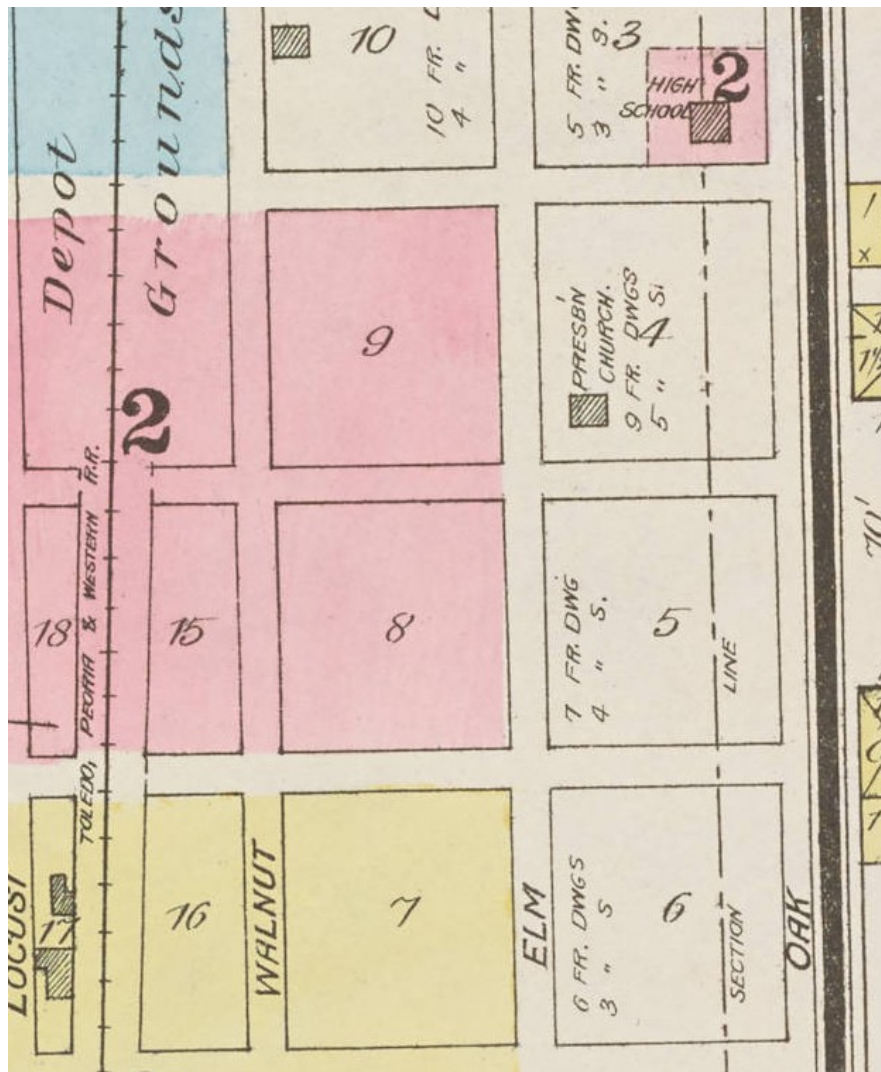
Residential Building Information			
Occupancy	Style	Year Built	Total Living Area
Single-Family	1 1/2 Story Frame	1885	2,196

The tax assessor's records indicate the house was built in 1885. This a relatively old house for Fairbury.

Sanborn Insurance Maps

The Sanborn Insurance companies made a series of maps for Fairbury between 1885 and 1911.

1885 Sanborn

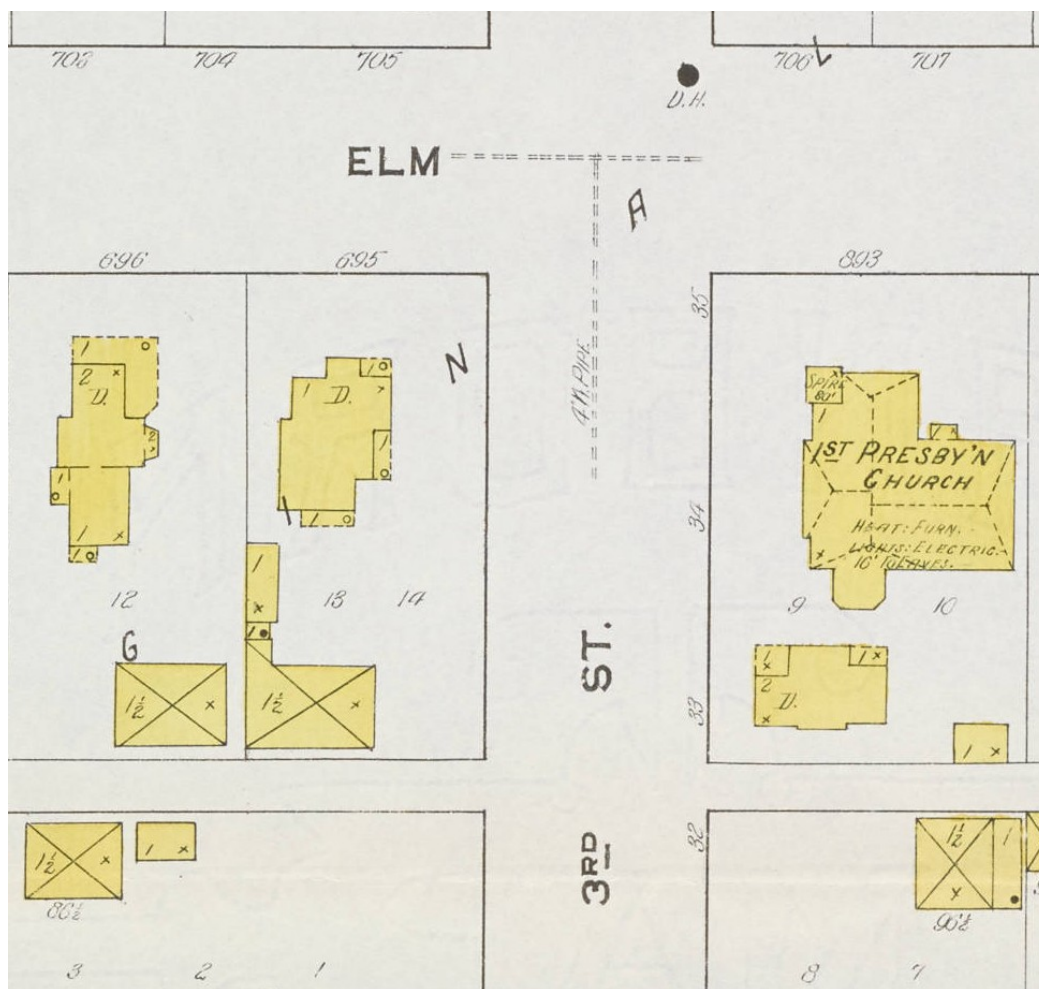


There were 7 frame buildings (houses) in that block in 1885. Unfortunately, it does not show where they were.

1892, 1898, 1906 Sanborn Maps

That block is not shown.

1911 Sanborn Map sheet 6



The house is shown on the 1911 Sanborn Map.

Pantagraph

“101 W. elm” got no hits for this house.

“101 west elm” got a bit hit, Dr. Brewer lived and died in that house !!

Nov. 2, 1933, Pantagraph.....

DR. BREWER, 90, FAIRBURY, DIES

Fall Is Fatal to Oldest Physician in Livingston County.

Fantagraph Central Illinois Service.

FAIRBURY. — Dr. Daniel B. Brewer, 90, of 101 West Elm street, died at the Fairbury hospital at 3 p. m. Wednesday. He had been ill for a year and last Monday he fell at his home, fracturing his hip.

The funeral will be held at 2 p. m. Friday at the Fairbury Presbyterian church. The Rev. C. S. Davies will officiate and burial will be in Graceland cemetery. The Knights Templar will also have a part in the services.

He was the son of Sylvester and Sarah Hoke Brewer and was born in Warren county, Ohio, Jan. 21, 1843. He moved with his parents to White Water, Wis., where he was graduated from high school. Later he was graduated from the Milton college at Milton, Wis. He taught for several years in Wisconsin and for one year was a teacher at the state reform school at Waukesha.

He was graduated from the Bennett School of Medicine and the Hahneman School of Medicine in Chicago. He married Lottie Jean Rogers May 10, 1882, and had resided in Fairbury since 1873.

He was a member of the I.O.O.F. lodge and was a Mason for 61 years. Surviving are his widow and one grandson, Dan B. Claudon, and two brothers, Peter and Sylvester Brewer, Wisconsin; and a sister, Mrs. Cynthia Roe, Ft. Atkinson.

Dr. Brewer was one of the oldest active physicians in Livingston county, practicing his profession until a year ago, when he retired.

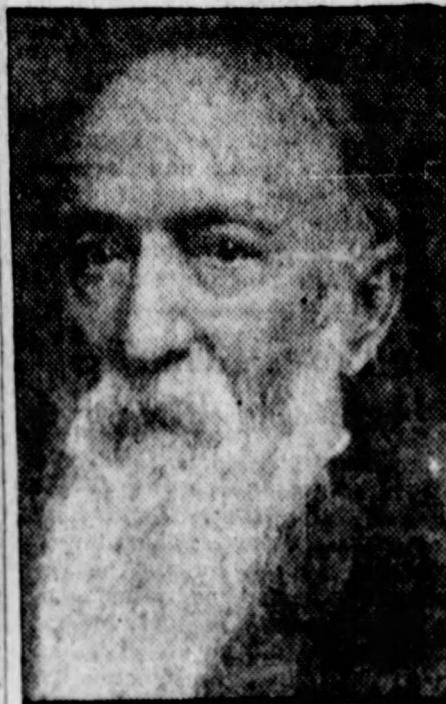
BOOTS AND HER

BOOT
AND THE
PROFESSOR
HAVE
SEARCHED
THE STATION,
TRYING
THEIR BEST
TO PICK
UNCLE IRA
OUT OF
THE CROWD

LOOK, BOOTS
BET MY B
SHIRT THA
OVER THE



Doctor Dies at 90



Dr. Daniel B. Brewer

... of Fairbury, was the oldest physician in Livingston county, practicing until a year ago.

Dr. Daniel B. Brewer

Obit says he got to Fairbury by 1873, so he could have had the house built in 1885.

Fairbury Blade

-you can access old Blades for free from Dominy Library web site, choose Resources, then Blade to access

Oct. 20, 1960 Blade

<p>1 is weekly edition.</p> <p>1 Guest Come Here From Minnesota</p> <p>Mr. and Mrs. Hans Gravening, International Falls, Minnesota, are guests of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Bishop, 101 West Elm. They have been making a trip visiting with relatives and have come here from Milwaukee where they spent several days.</p> <p>1 On Friday, they will leave by 1 car to go to Minneapolis where 1 they will visit and then go on to 3 Grand Forks, N. D. Mr. Bishop and family will accompany them to Minneapolis, where they will be week end guests of his sister, 1 Mrs. Ronald Fleagle.</p>	<p>of the Mitchell Meenen's or Po</p> <p>The Fairbury Blade Thursday, Oct. 20, 1960 Page Two</p> <p>Rebekahs Meet Monday Night</p> <p>Charity Home Rebekah Lodge met Monday night with a large attendance.</p> <p>In the absence of the Noble Grand, Mrs. Jim Waters, who is with her granddaughter in Chicago, Mrs. Royce Carter filled the Noble Grands station in a very efficient manner.</p>
---	---

So in October of 1960, Mr. and Mrs. Gary Bishop lived there.

1885 Blade

There are 9 articles which mention Dr. Brewer in Fairbury, checked a couple to see if it mentioned him building a new house at that address, but they did not. Rest of articles need checked to see if they mention it.

1930 Fairbury Phone Book (Oldest phone book at Fairbury Echoes Museum that we have)

Dr. Brewer should be listed since he died in 1933, and he is listed.....his telephone number was 61!

KECK'S AGENCY**INSURANCE**

Phones: Office 59, Res. 60 or 269

FAIRBURY**ILLINOIS**

Best, Mrs. Carrie — Nurse, Fairbury Hospital, S. Fifth. Tel. 387.

Billingsly, Jack—Contractor — (Eunice). 604 W. Elm.

Bingham, W. G.—Retired — (Sarah). 405 E. Oak. Tel. 407 G.

Birch, A. H.—Retired — (Margaret). 301 N. Seventh. Tel. 346.

Blackwood, Mrs. Carolyn—Bookkeeper. 306 E. Maple. Tel. 551.

Blanchard, Mrs. Dora — Housewife

Brandt, Mrs. Henry—Housewife—109 E. Ash. Tel. 129.

Braun, Mrs. A. E.—Housewife—110 E. Oak. Tel. 378.

Braun, Will—State Investigator—Billie, Sarah Ann. 110 E. Oak. Tel. 378.

Brewer, Dr. D—Physician and Surgeon—(Lottie J.) 101 W. Elm. Tel. 61.

Bishop, Mrs. G. L. — (Hazel)

1974

When I was a senior in high school, I went to this house to buy a Ford transmission from Derek Rabe. At that time the Rabe family lived there.

Unknown Date

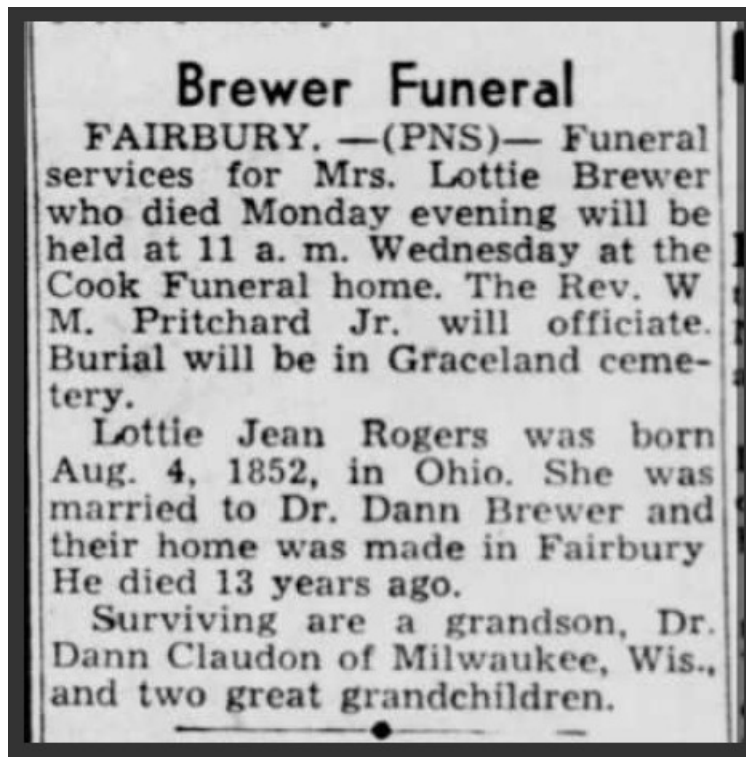
My mother, who is 89, thinks a Morris family lived there, possibly before the Rabe family?

Blade

Search for “101 west elm” only gave 1 hit, the Bishop family article noted above.

Search for “101 w. elm” gave 0 hits.

March 20, 1946 Pantagraph



Dr. Brewer died in 1933, and his widow lived until 1946. I would bet that she continued to live in the house until 1946 when she died.

Dr. Brewer involved with Fairbury's biggest business scandal

His daughter married a Claudon, who was the Claudon's banker's son, and their bank is now Lost in Time restaurant, kitty-corner from the Post Office.

Unfortunately, his daughter died young, and they had their only child, a son.

The banker's son was involved with embezzlement and other crimes at the bank. The bank was closed by the state auditor's and never re-opened. The older Claudon went on the run for several years, but eventually was caught in St. Louis, and returned to Livingston County for trial.....but no trial was held and he died about 6 months after he came back.

The banker's son tried to commit suicide, but botched the job and lived 4 more days before he died. The orphaned son of the banker's son, a small boy, was then raised by his grandfather, Dr. Brewer. Myself and the Fairbury Echoes Museum staff have been in contact with a descendant of the orphaned boy, who lives in Minnesota. This descendant woman has made several major cash contributions to the museum in memory of Dr. Brewer.

Additional Research that could be done

1. Check with the current owner and make sure they don't have the complete Title/Abstract document. It is thick, folded into thirds, and is often 30+ pages. Often it is stuck in with the other paperwork the current owner got when they bought the house. This document would give the complete ownership of the lot through about 1968. If you find it, I would like to borrow it to make a copy, and I can help decipher it.
2. Conduct more research in the Blade in the 1884 and 1885 issues to see if any mention of Dr. Brewer building the house at 101 W. Elm
3. Find more Fairbury telephone books that might identify who lived there between 1946 when Dr. Brewer's wife died and when the current owner bought the property. The Rabe family should show up in these phone books, and possibly a Morris family. We know that a Gary Bishop and wife lived there in 1960.
4. The property tax books for Livingston County go back to the early 1850s and they are in special storage in the basement of the old courthouse. I have been given special access to them because I am President of the Livingston County Historical Society and have researched who paid the taxes by year on the 1854 Strevell House and the 1857 Jones House. I don't know if they will allow access by the general public or not.

These old books should show who paid the property taxes by year from 1885 to the present day. It would be very time consuming to look up each year since they are in books by year. You also have to know the block number and lot number. From the tax assessor's web site, the house is on Block 5 Lots 13 and 14.

5. Could visit the Fairbury Echoes Museum and visually manually scan through the other phone books and see who lived at 101 W. Elm. We have several in the 1940s, maybe a 1950s one, I can't remember for sure. It is time consuming because they are in alphabetical order, so you have to scan every name and look for the right address.

Dale C. Maley
April 1, 2025

